



Alliance for the Advancement of
Infant Mental Health



March 21, 2017

A statement of support from the Infant Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona:

Alliance Statement Opposing Separation of Mothers and Children at Borders

The Infant Toddler Mental Health Association of Arizona and *The Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health (Alliance)* join with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in firmly opposing the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) proposal to separate immigrant mothers from their children when they arrive at the U.S. border.

The science of infant mental health is clear that relational health is the foundation for optimal social, emotional and cognitive development across the life span. That is, the parent-child relationship provides safety, comfort, and security, ingredients required to promote good mental health for infants and children. This relationship provides a protective bond, an interruption to which is traumatic and places the young child at risk for significant developmental and behavioral disorders in early childhood and later years. We know that building on a fragile foundation is risky for sustaining physical and mental health.

We encourage border authorities to take into account the needs of infants and young children for emotional and physical safety by ensuring that no young child is separated from his/her parents.

Signed in support by:

The Board of Directors- Infant Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona

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